AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claims 1-7. (Cancelled.)

8. (Currently Amended) An RNA variant adopting the following secondary structure (I), wherein said RNA variant comprises a bulge structure introduced in the region in which hydrogen bonds form between nucleotides 8 to 14 and nucleotides 73 to 79[[.]]

9. (Original) The RNA variant according to claim 8 comprising a bulge structure which is introduced by substituting all or part of the sequence of the region of

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nucleotides 73 to 79 within the nucleotide sequence of an RNA adopting secondary structure (I).

Claims 10-11. (Cancelled)

- 12. (Original) An RNA comprising the RNA variant according claim 8 and a selected RNA chain linked thereto.
- 13. (Original) The RNA according to claim 12 wherein said selected RNA chain is a ribozyme or an antisense RNA.
- 14. (Original) The RNA according to claim 12 wherein a bulge structure is formed with any nucleotide of an RNA chain linked to the 3' terminus and any nucleotide of the region of nucleotides 8 to 14 within the nucleotide sequence of an RNA adopting secondary structure (I).
- 15. (Previously Presented) An expression vector comprising DNA encoding the RNA variant of claim 8.
- 16. (New) An RNA variant comprising from 5' to 3':

a tRNA sequence in which the last seven bases of the mature tRNA sequence are removed; and

a linker sequence;

wherein the RNA variant has the secondary structure of the tRNA but further comprises a bulge structure formed by unmatched nucleotide pairs in the tRNA amino-acyl stem.

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- 17. (New) The RNA variant of claim 16, wherein the RNA variant further comprises a ribozyme or an antisense RNA attached to the 3' end of the linker sequence.
- 18. (New) An expression vector comprising DNA encoding the RNA variant of claim17.